THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

TEACHER AND PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD EDUCATION IN ST. PAUL, ALBERTA

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled, "Teacher and Public Opinion Toward Education In St. Paul, Alberta," submitted by Ted Leo Cabaj in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education in Educational Psychology.

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ABSTRACT

The first part of this research involved application of Gallup Poll interview procedures and format in sampling the opinions toward education issues of a small urban community population (N = 4303) in North East, Alberta, Canada, and its teacher population (N = 126). Comparison was made of the opinions of the two groups to the same issues.

Besides revealing that strong opinions toward several educational issues were held by both groups and that the two groups in the community held relatively similar opinions on most issues, this study proved that an extensive opinion poll can be conducted cheaply, efficiently and thoroughly in a three day period by utilization of high school students, thus providing valuable, reliable and instant information to decision makers on current public attitudes toward education. Sampling and polling techniques, an interviewers manual, and statistical procedures are outlined in detail.

In the second part of the research, a Home Index Questionnaire was adapted and developed, and administered to the same public sample. A high and low socio-economic background group was thus defined and comparison of responses between groups to each question of the poll in the first part of the study was made. No significant differences of opinion between the two groups were found,

however, interesting conclusions and implications for further research are made.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The value of public opinion measurement or poll-taking in decision-making has been recognized for centuries. Roman sculptors, for example, crudely sampled the masses as to their most popular tastes in their art because they recognized that creations which kindled artistic appeal of a large number of people were associated with fame and glory for the creator.

Early literature often described a king or his servant in disguise informally polling the king's subjects and thusly their likelihood of support or lack of support on crucial issues or pending decisions.

In a democratic system where the masses can force the demise of governments or governing bodies, at all levels, through the expression of a mass of complex opinion through the voting system, a priori, accurate and frequent measurement of what the public feels and thinks about multitudes of issues through the polling procedure has gained considerable import to those in ultimate decision-making positions. Consequently, North Americans in recent years are spending many millions of dollars utilizing fairly sophisticated techniques of opinion polling as "thermometers of public temperature" (How to Rewarm your Public Support of its Schools, p. 4) towards such things as election issues,

candidate popularities, marketing techniques, policy issues, change and the like.

The demonstrated need for opinion measurement in the educational arena in North America, especially at the community level, is also apparent. In Canada, the B.N.A. Act, with very few exceptions, delegated educational responsibilities to Provincial Governments. Through School Acts, Statutes, and regulations, Provincial Governments, without exception, have further delegated responsibilities for elementary and secondary education of the majority of Canadian citizenry to Local School Boards which are comprised of regularly elected representatives from within defined physical jurisdictions.

All three levels of government financially support and share in funding of education. The federal government disburses large sums of monies earmarked for education to the Provinces. The Provinces are free to add further monies to the Educational Fund and distribute the Education Dollar on an equalization formula to local School Boards who, if they wish to operate an educational system that costs more than the allocated grants, must raise monies on their own. Each level of government is therefore periodically subjected to public opinion on financial issues on election days.

However, both Federal and Provincial governments get their revenues through relatively well-disguised systems of collection such as excise taxes, royalties, corporate taxes and even government corporation profits. The School

Board, if it operates educational programs that cost more than is provided for by grants, must appeal directly to their defined electorate for increased taxation on local property. Such requisites, being very visible and having immediate and direct effects on the majority of voters, make local governments very sensitive to public feelings on the volatile issue of finances as it relates to education.

In Alberta, recent amendments to the Alberta School Act (Part 7) and policy regulations make it mandatory for any School Board to go to a local plebiscite should the Department of Education not approve a Board's request to increase unsupported expenditures over the previous year. Thusly, Alberta School Boards, faced with rapidly increasing and inflationary educational costs, public demands for more intense and broader educational services, tightened grants and regulations by the Provincial Government, are more than ever in the past, at the mercy of their electorate.

If Boards are, therefore, to get public support, especially during election and plebiscite time, all major educational decisions must reflect the mood of their electorate. The need for Boards to keep a pulse on public opinion is succinctly expressed by Dr. George Gallup in PDK (1973):

> "The raison d'etre of these annual surveys ... is to help guide the decision of educators. Progress is only possible when the people are properly informed and when they are ready, through their tax dollars, to bear the costs of progress. For these reasons, these surveys are directed chiefly toward appraising the state of

> public knowledge and ascertaining public attitudes towards the present practices, readiness to accept new programs, and ideas for meeting educational costs." (p. 1)

Researchers in the area of public opinion (Hennessey, 1965; Lane and Sears, 1964; Stevens, 1974) and dozens of other authors in areas of propaganda, advertising and other related areas, emphatically state that knowing what a particular public thinks about a specific issue, thing or stimulus is a prerequisite to establishment of a program or campaign of systematically changing the direction of or shaping that public attitude or opinion.

In some areas and under certain circumstances it may be highly desirable for those at the decision level of the education process to have an accurate picture, at short notice, of what the public feels about a specific issue or spectrum of issues. Refined polling techniques enable such information retrieval swiftly, accurately and cheaply.

Relatively large differences between what a public feels about an issue and the decisions made by educators relative to the issue often cause a lot of friction and negative reaction which frequently results in withdrawal of desirable involvement in the educational process. Knowledge of public opinion can assist educators in making decisions which closely reflect the cumulative wishes of the relevant public and thus in maintaining or increasing public involvement and support at all levels of education.

CHAPTER TWO

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The basic raison d'etre of this study is to provide practical and relatively accurate information about how the public views and feels about a large variety of important educational issues in the small urban community of St. Paul, Alberta, Canada. Because St. Paul consists of a population that has a rather diverse and strong religious and ethnic composition, a wide range of socio-economic and educational levels, a broad and unusually complex system of education delivery and administration, it has been frequently stated that educational needs and values are significantly different from other educational jurisdictions in Alberta.

Thus, this study focuses on adapting and utilizing proven polling techniques to measure that community's attitudes towards some interesting and relevant educational issues. The information gleaned through this study should be of use and interest to all those interested in education in this community, including such groups as School Boards, Professional Educators, parents and a variety of community groups.

Furthermore, it is envisaged that the tools, approaches and techniques adapted for the study may have application to others undertaking similar projects.

The objects of this study are twofold:

1. To delineate educational-related issues on which the Public of St. Paul and Teachers in St. Paul Schools hold significantly positive or negative views, and

2. To determine whether the Public of St. Paul with lower socio-economic backgrounds holds different opinions or percepts towards educational issues than does the public of St. Paul with higher socio-economic backgrounds.

CHAPTER THREE

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNITY AND STUDY POPULATION

St. Paul is a small urban centre located in North-eastern Alberta. Edmonton, the capital of the Province, with a population of approximately one-half million, lies 135 miles south-west of this community.

According to annual census figures, the population has remained stable in the last several years; the November 1975 census records 4303 residents. Estimates of ethnic origin of residents tend towards general agreement at 40% French, 25% Slavic, and the remaining 35% consisting mainly of Scandinavian, British, Native and American.

An estimated 50% of the population is of Roman Catholic, 25% of Protestant and the remaining 25% of other religious or non-religious background.

The St. Paul economic base is of primarily an agrarian and social services nature with no significant industrial activity. Decentralized Federal and Provincial Government services such as Indian Affairs and Northern Development, R.C.M.P., Canada Manpower and Immigration, Health and Social Development, Attorney-General's Department, Fish and Wildlife and a variety of Branches and Services under these Departments contribute largely to the employment activity of the area. Federal and Provincial

studies have consistently classified North-eastern Alberta, where St. Paul is geographically located, as economically deprived.

Settlement of this agriculture and lakeland country commenced at the turn of the twentieth century at the instigation of French missionaires.

The area, within a thirty-five-mile radius, consists of mixed farm enterprises ranging from poor to above-average. Within this same radius are found three large Indian reservations. The socio-economic level of residents ranges from an above-provincial-average on welfare rolls to a small percentage of the population nearing or in the six-digit annual income range.

Of special relevance to this study is the history of the existing educational system of St. Paul. Until the 1960's, the Catholic and public St. Paul School District #2228 had sole responsibility for education within the urban community. Because of a gradual influx of non-French, non-Catholic and considerable agitation on religious and language grounds, and rights guaranteed by legislation under the B.N.A. Act and the Alberta Education Act, the Glen Avon Protestant Separate School District was legally recognized and has for the last decade and a half operated its own separate school.

In the mid-sixties, during the era of Federal and Provincial vocational educational incentive grants and much successful and local political activity to involve a

sufficient population to warrant a vocational school under terms of these grants, the St. Paul Regional High School District #1, a first of its kind in Alberta, was legally born. This School Board consists of three-year appointments of two members each from the County of St. Paul and St. Paul School District Boards, and one member from the Glen Avon Protestant Separate Board.

St. Paul Ecole Regionale School opened in 1970 and replaced all the High School programs in both urban schools and attracts students, who wish specialized programs, from County of St. Paul Schools.

Because this School Board, by law, has no authority to requisition monies through local tax levy or plebiscite, it must either operate within the constraints of Provincial grants or politic with the three cooperating jurisdictions for additional funds. Should one or more of the cooperating jurisdictions refuse to share their local levy or should one or more of the Boards get defeated on a plebiscite to increase the education property tax, much speculation exists about the impact and consequences on education programs for the High School population of the community.

Needless to say, the political situation related to educational decisions is an interesting and complex one.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STUDY

THE STUDY APPROACH

The basic approach of this study is of a descriptive nature. Because of the time factor and financial constraints, only limited tests of reliability and validity for the various instruments and procedures were made for this study. Extreme caution and care were, however, exercised in choosing and adapting instruments and techniques that have been well established, repetitively proven in a variety of similar situations and that generally meet with high approval of experts in this area of study.

An Opinionaire (Appendix E) adapted from Gallup (1975) and Brosseau (1973), and a Home Index Questionnaire (Appendix F) adapted from Elley (1961) were administered through a personal interview method to a 5% random sampling of the adult population (N = 2662) within the St. Paul School jurisdictions area and to a 50% random sampling of all active teachers (N = 112) in Schools within these jurisdictions.

THE STUDY SAMPLES

Because it is desirable that the findings of this study be generalizeable to all of the potential voting public

in St. Paul School elections, the population universe is defined as all those 2667 men and women, nineteen years of age and older appearing in the 1975 St. Paul Census. The School Elections Act (R.S.A. 1970), in summary, states that anyone who is a British or Canadian subject, is nineteen years of age or older, who has resided in the Province of Alberta for six months or more, and is at the time of election an established resident in the political jurisdiction at the date of voting shall be entitled to a vote.

The teacher population universe is defined as all those 112 teachers instructing in all the four schools in St. Paul operated by the three School Board jurisdictions.

To avoid any selection bias, all the names appearing on the Census list were alphabetically arranged and each name was assigned a chronological number starting with "1" for the first name in the alphabetical list and ending with "2667" for the last name on the list. One hundred and twenty-six random numbers were generated by the computer out of the total possible 2667 and a list of names matching those numbers was made. This sample formed the initial polling sample.

An additional list of fifty random numbers, independent of the first 126, was similarly generated and a similar list of names matching these numbers was made. This list was only used if and when members of the first sample could not be reached after three successive attempts or when a member of the first list refused to participate in the

poll. In the end, only 18 of the latter sample were required.

The teacher population sample was also identically drawn from a finite teacher population of 112 and corresponding name lists were made. Similarly, a reserve sample list, independent of the first, was made. Because the finite population of teachers was small, a 50% sample (N = 57) was used. According to statisticians, for example Ferguson (1974), a sample of 25 would have been adequate for statistical validity and reliability purposes.

THE INSTRUMENTS

St. Paul Poll of Education, 1976

This 120-item questionnaire (Appendix E) was constructed by utilizing most of the questions directly from the Gallup Poll of Attitudes Towards Education 1969-1973 (Elam, 1975) and questions already modified from Gallup Polls by Brosseau (1973) and Boulet (1972). Because Gallup claims that all questions were put through a series of pretests conducted prior to actual use in fieldwork, even though no evidence can be found in the literature to confirm statistical methods or tests used to confirm validity of his questions, and because Gallup's polls and his analysis techniques have been exceedingly accurate in predicting public opinion over many years, it would appear quite safe to accept the validity of both his instrument and his techniques.

Questions 24 to 29 were personally designed to elicit opinions of strictly local and specific nature. Considerable care was utilized in following Gallup's style, format and structure and all were piloted for clarity and impartiality.

Questions 30 to 36 request personal data from the respondent such as sex, school attendance, education, age, religious affiliation and school involvement. This information was utilized to check the representativeness of the sample and responses patterns could, if required, be analyzed based on these variables.

The percentage responses of both the population and teacher samples to each question on the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 are presented in Appendix G.

Home Index Questionnaire

In order to identify low and high socio-economic backgrounds of the respondents in the St. Paul Population Sample so that comparisons could be made of response styles or opinions between these groups and other variables mentioned above, Gough's (1944) Home Index Scale was slightly modified to suit the St. Paul population in 1976 (see Appendix F). The scale purports to accurately identify socio-economic level of respondents without including specifically such criteria as occupational groupings or annual incomes.

Gough claims that the test re-test reliability of the instrument is .989 and that it correlates very highly with other social prestige and occupational status scales, including Blishen's (1958) scales. Elley (1961) in adapting this scale for his study which involved "estimating socio-economic status" (p. 102) found good construct and face validity as well as high correlations between other similar instruments.

In order to increase instrument reliability and validity and minimize other errors of the Home Index Questionnaire only the respondents who scored in the top or 4th quartile were defined as high socio-economic respondents and only those who received scores in the bottom or 1st quartile were defined as respondents with a low socio-economic background.

The instrument, in its current form (Appendix F), was administered to 23 random adults in St. Paul with the explanation that responses on the Questionnaire were required for research purposes. Three weeks later the instrument was readministered to the same 23 adults with the explanation that further input into the study was required. The Pearson Product Moment correlation between "Yes" and "No" responses between Time 1 and Time 2 on the Home Index Questionnaire was .966 and indicates that the degree of stability of responses on the questionnaire is similar to that of Gough (1944).

THE PILOT STUDY

The St. Paul Poll of Education, 1976, and the Home Index Questionnaire were administered to ten people having first-hand knowledge of St. Paul. Minor modifications and adjustments in wording, phrasing, and coding of responses to parts of the instrument were made as a result of the pilot study. Clarity of instructions and questions, scoring methods, completion time, and respondent reactions were the prime focus of the pilot.

Interview time, with instructions, ranged from 18 to 30 minutes. The format of the questionnaire makes scoring easy and systematic. Respondents did not feel that the questions were too long, cumbersome, or repetitious.

There was some concern about the possible negative reaction to the Home Study Index Questionnaire because it attempts to get, very obviously, at material wealth of respondents. It was felt that choice of pollsters and instructions about explaining confidentiality of the poll would minimize negative reactions; specific refusals by the public sample to answer the questionnaire were nil. Furthermore, to avoid masking of responses of the Poll of Education, the instrument was administered at the end of the interview.

The format and scoring procedure were closely checked with the staff of the Education Computing Centre.

POLLING PROCEDURE

Choosing the Pollsters

Experience indicates that the community of St. Paul responds well to and readily supports most programs and activities in which high school students are involved. As a result, 19 female and 17 male grade XI and XII students from Sociology 20, a grade XI option course, at the St. Paul Regional High School were recruited to carry out home interviews on behalf of the University of Alberta. Average age of these students was 17 years, 2 months, with an age range of 15 to 19 years. As a reward they were released from three class sessions, given special training in interview techniques and procedures, and following the analysis of the results, the researcher gave one class lecture on the findings of the survey (see p. 18).

Several students, at the beginning, expressed skepticism about their ability to carry out an interview with an older, unknown person; however, after the training sessions based on well-defined procedures and directions all students appeared to be enthusiastic and their skill and enthusiasm was confirmed by the high success rate of well-completed opinionaire returns.

Assigning Pollsters

Population Sample. Since the researcher had personal knowledge of residence locations of a high majority

of the population, twenty-six lists of four or five names from the original population sample, along with addresses and telephone numbers, plus two names from the reserve population sample list were made, apriori, on the basis of geographic proximity. The two reserve names on each list were used only after three consecutive attempts were made to reach the persons on the original list or in the case of a blatant refusal to cooperate with the interviewer. In the final analysis only 18 replacements from the reserve list were utilized; six of these were no longer resident in St. Paul; nine could not be reached at home; and three flatly refused to cooperate with the interviewer.

Teacher Sample. The same procedure was utilized as for the population sample. Ten lists of five or six names from the original sample with two reserve names were made on the basis of geographic proximity. A 100% response rate was achieved and therefore, in this case, the reserve list was not necessary. Teacher questionnaires were starred in the bottom left-hand corner so that the completed questionnaires could be separated for purposes of differential analysis.

Letter of Announcement to Sample Population

Five days prior to polling commencement, a letter to each member of the sample titled "Dear Citizen of St. Paul" (Appendix A) was forwarded by mail.

Interviewers Package

Prior to the first training session, a package for each interviewer was assembled including the following materials:

- sufficient copies of the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 for each original sample number, plus an extra copy in case of spoilage during an interview; plus another copy to be used during the training session
- a list of interviewees assigned to each candidate along with addresses and telephone numbers. The two reserve names were clearly identified as "reserve"
- sufficient numbers of an 8½ x 11 unmarked envelope for completed questionnaires
- a "Letter of Introduction" indicating the interviewers name (Appendix A)
- an "Interviewers Manual" giving instructions and procedures for interviewing (Appendix D).

Training Sessions

The training session was given in two parts during 80-minute Sociology classes on April 12 and 18, 1976.

In order to underline the importance of the study and to minimize researcher "masking", it was stressed that the study was being conducted for the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta. Both the Instructor of the Sociology 20 course and the researcher stressed

the importance of very strict adherence to procedures, instructions and objectivity. All the materials in the interviewers package were read, queried, and discussed in detail. At the end of the first session interviewers were asked to retain and to again review the Interviewers Manual on their own.

During the second session interviewers were divided into groups of two and each administered the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 and the Home Index Questionnaire to the other. The Instructor and researcher clarified and responded to questions as they arose. Interviewers were given permission not to attend the next three days classes, in lieu of the time they would be spending in the evenings for polling.

Interviewers were asked to contact the researcher at a telephone number immediately if they encountered difficulty during the polling. Only half a dozen phone calls related to address errors and scoring of response procedures were received throughout the polling.

Polling

Actual polling commenced at 4:00 p.m., April 14, 1976. By Friday morning, April 16, 171 of the 183 questionnaires were turned in to the researcher. The remaining 12 were turned in by late Friday night. With the exception of a few omitted or "refused to answer" questions on a half dozen questionnaires, all were very thoroughly completed.

Coding and Scoring

Each of the completed opinionaires and Home Index Questionnaires were randomly assigned a number; 1 to 126 for the population sample and 501 to 557 for the teacher sample. The responses to each question for each opinionaire were key-punched on IBM 360 cards utilizing the precoded numbers for each response on the questionnaire.

CHAPTER FIVE

STATISTICAL PROCEDURES AND TREATMENT OF DATA

Study I - Public and Teacher Poll

Utilizing the findings of response patterns, in percentage form, to each question, the basic object of the study was to make careful generalizations about: What opinions the finite St. Paul population held towards specific educational issues in the spring of 1976; what opinions the finite teacher population of St. Paul held towards specific educational issues in the spring of 1976; and whether there existed a significant difference of opinion towards specific educational issues between the finite general and teacher populations of St. Paul towards the same issues.

The results of the responses of both samples to each question were key-punched, scored and tabulated in percentage form by computer. The following table from the Gallup Polls of Attitudes Towards Education 1969-73, Phi Delta Kappa, edited by Elam (1973) was utilized for the population sample in this study to determine whether a significant difference occurred between responses with 95% confidence limits or whether the difference, if any, could be considered as due to sampling error alone.

In short, the greater the percentage of difference between responses, over and above the confidence limits, the

Table 1

Recommended Allowance for Sampling Error of a Percentage
(In Percentage Points at 95 in 100 Confidence Level)

Size of Sample	1,500	1,000	750	600	400	200	100
Percentages near 10	2	2	3	3	4	5	7
Percentages near 20	2	3	4	4	5	7	9
Percentages near 30	3	4	4	4	6	8	10
Percentages near 40	3	4	4	5	6	8	11
Percentages near 50	3	4	4	5	6	8	11
Percentages near 60	3	4	4	5	6	8	11
Percentages near 70	3	4	4	4	6	8	10
Percentages near 80	2	3	4	4	5	7	9
Percentages near 90	2	2	3	3	4	5	7

greater the likelihood that a real or strong opinion in support of or against a particular issue was real and not due to measuring or sampling error.

Since the teacher sample size is smaller than 100, the aforementioned Recommended Allowances for Sampling Error of a Percentage tables could not be utilized. A search of statistics texts and literature did not result in finding similar tables for smaller samples. Consultation with statisticians at the University of Alberta revealed no economical or plausible method to construct such a table.

Upon recommendation and on the side of caution, it was decided to arbitrarily add to Elam's (1975, p. 187) table a 2% allowance for sampling error of a percentage to each decile the sample size fell below 100. Since the teacher sample size was 57, the sixth column of Table 2 was

Table 2

Arbitrary Allowance for Sampling Error of a Percentage for Samples of Less Than 100 (In Percentage Points at 95 in 100 Confidence Level)

Size of Sample	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10
Percentages near 10	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25
Percentages near 20	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	27
Percentages near 30	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28
Percentages near 40	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	27	29
Percentages near 50	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	27	29
Percentages near 60	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	27	29
Percentages near 70	10	13	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28
Percentages near 80	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	27
Percentages near 90	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25

utilized to determine whether a percentage difference in responses was real or due to sampling error alone.

Using the sample size of 100 from Table 1, or the general population sample size for this study, then, the largest possible percentage due to error at the .05 level of significance was 11 percentage points below or above the percentage obtained at the 50 percentage level. For example, if 80% of the sample chose a given alternative, then 95 times out of 100, the percentage obtained if the total population were polled, would be between 69 and 91. Thus, in determining whether or not a majority response was significant, when that response was near the 80% majority, a twenty-two percentage difference had to be present between the highest choice in percentages and the next highest choice in percentage. Similarly, for the teacher sample,

Table 2 (N = 50) a majority response of 80% would require a 38 point percentage difference between the highest choice in percentage and the next highest choice in percentage before it could be considered a significant difference of opinion at the 95% confidence level.

Furthermore, to add stringency to the criteria used, if to a particular question, 60% of the respondents answered "Yes", 20% "No" and 10% "No response" or "No opinion" was added to the second highest category, that is, the 20% "No" response, before the test of significance was applied.

In addition to analyzing the responses of the population and teacher samples to the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976, a comparison of responses of the population sample and teacher sample was made. Utilizing maximum recommended allowances for sampling error of Tables 1 and 2 for N = 100 and N = 50 respectively, a 32 percentage point difference in responses to any question was considered a significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Study II - Home Index Questionnaire

The Home Index Questionnaire (Appendix F) was administered to the population sample (N = 126). It purports to measure and classify socio-economic backgrounds of respondents by requesting "Yes" and "No" responses to 20 specific questions about life's amenities and activities which can be generally suggestive of affluence and social

class. Thus, for this study, the greater the number of "Yes" responses to the 20 questions on the instrument by the respondent, the greater the indication of affluence; and conversely, the fewer the number of "Yes" responses, the greater the indication of non-affluence.

The object of this study was to determine whether the respondents who scored the most or top 20% of "Yeses" on the Home Index Questionnaire responded differently to each item on the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 from those who scored in the bottom 20% of "Yeses". The middle 60% who scored "Yeses" were left out to improve the validity of socio-economic classification of the samples.

The computer identified 24 respondents who scored the most "Yeses" and 25 respondents who scored the fewest "Yeses" on the questionnaire; thus, the definition of high and low socio-economic respondents respectively was defined.

The percentage responses of these two groups were compared on each item of the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976. The ninth column of Table 2 (N = 20) was utilized to determine whether these two groups responded significantly differently to each question on the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976. A 54 percentage difference between "Yes" or "No" responses to the same question was required before a "real" difference of response between the two groups could be assumed at the 95% confidence level.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS

Questions 30 to 37 of the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 were aimed at checking out the representativeness of the sample on such characteristics as school attendance of off-spring, sex, education, age, religion, and ethnic background.

Comparison of the percentage distributions of the sample population on these characteristics as indicated in Table 3 appear very close to actual occurrence of these characteristics in the finite populations. The researcher is, therefore, satisfied that the samples were roughly representative of the adult and teacher populations of St. Paul.

Study I - Public and Teacher Poll

Using Tables 1 and 2 for tests of significance at the 95% confidence levels for the Population Sample (N = 100) and Teacher Sample (N = 50), 78 and 66 out of 114 questions, respectively, met the criterion of significance. The significant differences in each of the tables contained in this study are marked with an asterisk.

To compare whether there was a significant difference of responses between the Population and Teacher Samples, the same tables were used to establish upper and

Table 3

Biographical Characteristics of Respondents in the Population Sample (N = 126) and in the Teacher Sample (N = 57)

Characteristic		Percent of Population Sample	Percent of Teacher Sample
What St. Paul Schools are the children in your family attending or have attended in the last 5 years?			
(a) Glen Avon		27	7
(b) St. Paul Elementary		36	35
(c) Racette		11	3
(d) St. Paul Regional		6	10
(e) Have no children, are too young to attend, have attended more than 5 years ago, or have attended schools outside of St. Paul		20	40
Sex:	Male	45	49
	Female	55	51
Education:	Less than grade 10	27	0
	Grades 10, 11 or 12 completed	54	2
	Post-secondary program for 2 or fewer years	10	9
	Post-secondary program of more than 2 years	9	89
Age:	19 - 29 years	18	26
	30 - 49 years	53	58
	50+ years	29	16
Religion:	Catholic	62	67
	Protestant	25	23
	Other	13	10
Ethnic Background:	French	49	35
	Slavic (Uk., Pol., Czech., Yug., Russ., etc.)	30	32
	Other (specify)	21	33
Do you generally speak the language of your ethnic origin in your household:	Yes	60	47
	No	40	53

lower confidence limits. For example, the "percentage near 50" row of Table 1 (N = 100) stipulates a 11 percentage point sampling error at the .05 level and Table 2 (N = 50), a 21 percentage point sampling error at the same confidence level, or a combined sampling error margin of 32 percentage points. Thus response differences of 32 percentage points between the Population and Teacher sample, to any question were considered as significant at the .05 level. Using the criterion 7 out of 114 questions met this test (see Questions 1, 4, 7e, 8f, 8i, 8l, 22q of St. Paul Poll of Education 1976)

Communications

The results of the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 indicate that the adult public of St. Paul felt ill-informed about what goes on in the school and that teachers in St. Paul Schools, on the contrary, felt well-informed (see Table 4). However, both the public and the teachers felt quite strongly that there is a need for more communication between the schools, the parents and community (see Table 5).

Both teachers and the public felt that (a) more open house days, (b) more opportunity to meet teachers individually about children, (c) a school newsletter, and (d) more articles in the newspaper were desirable methods in improving communications between school, parents and the community (see Table 6). The public felt that more

Table 4

Well Informed About What Goes on In School

Opinion	% Pop. Sample	% Teacher Sample
Yes	36	74*
No	64*	26

Table 5

Need for More Communication Between Schools and Parents

Opinion	% Pop. Sample	% Teacher Sample
Yes	86*	91*
No	14	9

Table 6

Ways to Improving Communications

Item	% Pop. Sample Yes	No	% Teacher Sample Yes	No
More open-house days	88*	12	68*	31
More frequent report cards	64*	36	49	51
More opportunity to meet teachers individually about your children	90*	10	98*	2
A school newsletter	69*	31	67*	33
More articles in newspaper	68*	32	79*	21
More parent-teacher days	83*	17	93*	7
Increased coverage by radio and newspaper	58	42	56	44

frequent report cards would be a way to improve such communications; the teachers were, however, equally divided in their opinion as to whether this would be helpful. Both the public and teachers were each equally divided on whether coverage by radio and newspaper would improve communications.

A strong majority of the public felt that it was ill-informed about what the School Board is doing (see Table 7); teachers on the other hand seemed to be equally split on this issue. Both groups, however, felt that information dispersal on Board activities should be carried out in newspaper articles, publication of minutes in the local paper and through newsletters (see Table 8).

Table 7

Informed About School Board Activities

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Yes	16	53
No	84*	47

General Opinion of Education

On the whole, both the public's and teachers' general opinion of education in St. Paul is that it is satisfactory (see Table 9).

Table 8

Ways of Improving Communication
Between Public and School Board

Item	Percent of Population Yes	No	Percent of Teachers Yes	No
Newspaper articles about School Board decisions and policies	86*	14	90*	10
Print the minutes of each Board meeting in local paper	71*	29	75*	25
A newsletter once in a while to explain policies and what Board is doing	84*	16	86*	14

Table 9

General Opinion of Education in St. Paul

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Very Good	14	19
Satisfactory	62*	74*
Poor	13	7
No Opinion	11	0

The Schools' Strong and Weak Points

The St. Paul public believes that its schools had especially good transportation systems and school facilities for their children (see Table 10). They expressed general satisfaction with teachers, curriculum, teaching methods, extra curricular activities, class sizes and equality of

Table 10

Ways in Which St. Paul Schools Are Good

Ways	Opinion			
	Percent of Population		Percent of Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Teachers	71*	29	93*	7
Curriculum	68*	32	68*	32
Facilities	82*	18	75*	25
Up-to-date teaching methods	69*	31	72*	28
Extra-curricular activities	69*	31	49	51
Small class sizes	62*	38	25	75*
Good administration	58	42	68	32
Good student-teacher relationships	52	48	70*	30
Parents are interested/participate	40	60	17	83*
Discipline	53	47	40	60
Transportation system	82*	18	84*	16
Equal opportunity for all	76*	24	68	32
Nothing good	27	73*	16	84*

opportunity provided for children by the schools. There was a hint that the public felt that parents do not express much interest or participation in school activities.

Many more teachers than the public, 93% and 71% respectively, felt that teachers in St. Paul Schools were especially good. They concurred with the public that the transportation systems and facilities were very satisfactory and that teaching methods were good.

Contrary to the public's opinion, teachers felt strongly that class sizes were too large. The public's opinion towards quality of student-teacher relationships was split, teachers, on the other hand, felt that their relationship with their students was good. Likewise,

teachers felt very strongly that parental involvement and interest in school activities was poor, which suggests that teachers deem parental involvement and support very important in the educational process.

To force responses and to get at priority of perceived problems, respondents in both groups were asked whether certain issues were problems with which the schools in this community must deal (see Table 11). Both the public (84%) and teachers (77%) were unanimous in their views that discipline was the foremost problem with which the school must deal (see Table 11), and that schools' approach to discipline was not strict enough (see Table 12). Both groups were asked in what ways discipline was not strict enough (see Table 13). There was strong agreement within the groups that (a) teachers seemed to lack authority, (b) there was disrespect for teachers prevalent in our schools, (c) students had too much freedom, (d) that existing rules were not enforced, (e) vandalism was not punished strictly enough, (f) and that parents generally were not interested in supporting disciplinary actions of the school. Contrary to popular notion, both groups did not see that dress code or expectations had anything to do with discipline.

Both groups, equally strongly, indicated that finances and "dope-drugs" were issues that should be given priority attention. Both groups held the opinion that schools did have problems that they must deal with in areas

of (a) parental lack of interest, (b) student motivation, (c) improvement of school board policies and, (d) improving respect for teachers.

Table 11

Problems With Which School Must Deal

Ways	Opinion			
	Percent of Population		Percent of Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Finances	78*	22	81*	19
Discipline	84*	16	77*	23
Facilities	52	48	47	53
Dope-Drugs	84*	16	81*	19
Teachers lack of interest/ability	66*	44	35	65
Parents lack	77*	23	84*	16
School administration	56	44	51	49
Curriculum	55	45	63	37
Pupils lack of interest	79*	21	79*	21
Vandalism	65*	35	40	60
Disrespect for teachers	79*	21	75*	25
School Board policies	62*	38	65	35
Using up-to-date methods	50	50	58	42
We have no problems	36	64*	21	79*

Table 12

Discipline in Schools

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Too strict	32	33
*Not strict enough	60*	65*
Just about right	8	0
Don't know	0	2

Table 13

In What Ways Discipline Not Strict Enough

Ways	Opinion			
	Percent of Population		Percent of Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Teachers lack authority	78*	22	78*	22
Students have too much freedom	75*	25	75*	25
Disrespect for teachers	79*	21	75*	25
Rules not enforced	75*	25	70*	30
Dress code too liberal	39	61*	17	83*
Vandalism is not punished strictly enough	69*	31	61*	39
Parents are not interested in supporting school discipline	68*	32	75*	25

The two groups seemed to be equally undecided on whether facilities, administration, curriculum propriety or updated methodology were problems.

The majority of the public (66%) felt that teachers lack of interest and ability was a problem the schools should examine, whereas, 65% of the teachers felt this was not a problem. Vandalism in schools appeared to be a problem for 65% of the public but only 40% of the teachers expressed the opinion that vandalism was of concern to the schools.

In the last several years there have been outcries by certain publics in the news media and amongst teachers themselves that constant and rampant changes in educational philosophy, curricula and methodology are eroding educational impact and adding to confusion for

teachers, students, and parents in the area of what are the ultimate goals of education.

Table 14 does not support this dissatisfaction amongst St. Paul teachers who felt that the amount of change in education was about right. The public, however, appears to be equally split on whether changes are too numerous or about right. Only 18% of the public and 5% of the teachers felt that there were not enough changes in education.

Table 14

Educational Changes

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Too many	29	21
Not enough	18	5
About right	37	60*
No opinion	16	14

Educational Financing

The St. Paul public and teachers both felt strongly that educational financing was a special problem area with which the schools should be concerned (see Table 11). The public, however, is evidently opposed to raising taxes to relieve the financial situation in education. Teachers were not clear on their opinion, 51% being in favor, 39% were opposed, and 10% were undecided (see Table 15).

Table 15

Raise Taxes for Education

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Favour	32	51
Oppose	61	39
No opinion	7	10

To determine what action was favoured in the case where no government supplementary funding was forthcoming and where requests for local supplementary requisitions for funding were defeated, the following question was asked: "Suppose your school board were forced to cut school costs because there is not enough money. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following actions." (See Table 16).

Neither the public nor the teachers were in favour of (a) increasing class sizes to decrease numbers of teachers, (b) reducing numbers of teachers by reducing option programs, or (c) cutting out kindergarten. No clear cut opinions were expressed by either group to the alternative of cutting out expenses related to instructional supplies and materials. Teachers did not express any strong feelings about reducing costs by cutting special programs such as counselling and special classes or by amalgamating school systems; however, the public felt that these were not the areas in which costs should be cut.

Table 16

Action a School Board Could Take to Reduce Costs

Opinion	%age of Population Agree	%age of Population Disagree	%age of Teachers Agree	%age of Teachers Disagree
Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes, say up to 30 students per class	33	67*	7	93*
Reduce the number of teachers by reducing the number of programs such as music, drama, physical education, etc.	32	68*	19	81*
Cut out kindergarten	29	71*	30	70*
Reduce janitorial and maintenance services	27	73*	23	77*
Reduce the amount of supplies and materials the teachers use in the classroom	53	47	39	61
Reduce special programs such as counselling and special classes	32	68*	49	51
Reduce the amount of preparation time for teachers during school hours	56	44	25	75*
Reduce the number of administrative personnel	60	40	75*	25
Reduce the amount of salary increases to teachers	53	47	23	77*
Reduce overlapping expenses by amalgamating school systems	68*	32	68	32

Teachers, on the other hand, hold strong opinions that costs should not be reduced by (a) reduction of teacher preparation time, (b) reduction of administrative personnel or (c) reduction of teacher salaries; whereas the public was undecided towards these alternatives.

Thus, especially where the public is concerned, there is a dilemma created for boards. There is strong opposition expressed to raising monies for educational purposes through local levy, yet there is no agreement, and in many cases strong opposition, to reduction of any existing programs.

Based on the assumption that some educational programs would have to be eliminated or reduced to decrease educational expenditures, a further question as to which programs should be reduced or cut was directed to those respondents who felt that this was a viable alternative (see Table 17). Here again no strong feelings were expressed by either groups as to which programs should be affected. There were, however, strong feelings expressed that academic subjects, vocational courses, industrial education and home economics and physical education should definitely not be considered for reduction. If certain programs had to be cut, it would seem both groups would probably show least resistance to reductions in areas of music and drama. Although teacher opinion towards cuts in second language courses and counselling services demonstrated no clear consensus, the

public values these programs. The public, on the other hand, appeared to express a neutral opinion towards expense cuts in extra-curricular activities; whereas, the teachers felt that this program should be one of the first to be reduced to save on educational spending.

Table 17

Which Programs Should Be Reduced

Opinion	Percentage of Population		Percentage of Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Music	40	60	37	63
Drama	60	40	65	35
Physical Education	25	75*	7	93*
Industrial arts and home economics	21	79*	16	84*
Extra-curricular activities	56	44	72*	28
Vocational courses	15	85*	16	84*
Academic subjects	12	88*	3	97*
Commercial or business courses	18	82*	25	75*
Second language courses (other than English)	37	63*	47	53
Counselling services	29	71*	47	53

Relevancy of Education

Although there were no clear cut opinions about whether "schools were preparing students well enough for life and employment", the responses of both groups tend to suggest that schools may not be doing a satisfactory job in this area (see Table 18).

Table 18

Schools Prepare Students Well Enough
For Life and Employment

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Agree	41	28
Disagree	50	60
No opinion	9	12

Those respondents who felt that schools were not preparing students well enough for life and employment were asked what improvements could be made to help remedy the situation (see Table 19). Both groups were unanimous to suggesting that there should be (a) more emphasis on basic subjects, (b) discipline and (c) relating school to employment situations. Both groups felt as strongly, that television in educational programs does not help to make education more relevant to life and employment. In view of the fact that local school boards have, of late, spent considerable time, effort and money on VTR and development of a community television consortium, it would appear that there may be considerable difficulty in soliciting teacher and public support and utilization of these services.

When asked whether there was too much emphasis being placed in high schools on preparing students for college and not enough emphasis on preparing students for occupations that do not require a college degree, teachers

strongly disagreed, whereas, the public felt that that was the case (see Table 20).

Table 19

Ways to Improve Students For Life and Employment

Item	Opinion			
	Percent of Population		Percent of Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
More emphasis on basic subjects	74*	26	79*	21
More discipline	61*	39	72*	18
Relating school to employment situations	64*	36	70*	30
More vocational courses	55	45	40	60
A greater variety of courses	48	52	37	63
More freedom to students to develop initiative	46	54	48	52
Greater use of television in schools	38	62*	21	79*
More visits to industry, museums exchange visits	55	45	58	42
Part time employment during school hours at high school level	56	44	68	32

Table 20

Too Much Emphasis in High School On College Preparation

Opinion	% of Population	% of Teachers
Agree	47	17
Disagree	35	68*
No opinion	18	15

Special Education and Other Services

Within the last several decades it has become the general expectation of society that everyone has a right to education to his or her maximum potential. In the last decade, most school jurisdictions have boasted of 80 to 90 per cent high school graduation of students who entered their schools commencing in Grade 1. Jurisdictions whose annual drop-out rate nears the 6 to 8 per cent level have been subjected to criticism about their philosophy, standards, delivery and approach. However, it is also a known fact that there are many students within the school systems who attend school because of parental and social expectations and not because of their own volition. This also is becoming a concern to the public and educators. To get the feeling of the public and teachers of St. Paul, the following statement and question was put to the respective samples:

> "Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school. What should be done in these cases."

The public felt strongly that these students should (a) get special counselling, (b) vocational training, (c) better and more interesting curriculum and teaching methods, (d) have teachers who take more interest in such students and that (e) special classes should be set up for these students (see Table 21). Teachers concurred with the public that part of the solution for these students

Table 21

Alternatives for Problem Students

Opinion	Percent of Population Yes	Percent of Population No	Percent of Teachers Yes	Percent of Teachers No
Special classes for all who are not interested	67*	33	32	68
Expel them	20	80*	34	66
Offer better/more interesting curriculum/teaching methods	75*	25	58	42
Special counselling	87*	13	91*	9
Harsher discipline	55	45	56	44
Vocational training	84*	16	74*	26
Make their parents responsible	51	49	68	32
Put in school for problem students	43	57	17	83*
Teachers should take more interest in such students	71*	29	60	40

would be special counselling and vocational training. The teachers, however, did not see putting problem students in special schools as a reasonable solution. Teachers tended to agree and the public was of the definite opinion that expulsion was not a solution with problem students.

The home was clearly viewed by both groups as the source of blame for children doing poorly in school (see Tables 16 and 22).

Sex education is viewed both by the public and teachers as being the responsibility of the school (see Table 23). However both groups were adamant in their opinion that it should not be taught at the elementary level. The public and teachers alike, most strongly favored

Table 22

Source of Blame for Children
Doing Poorly in School

Source	Opinion	
	% of Population	% of Teachers
Children	14	12
Home Life	46	75*
School	4	2
Teachers	9	0
No opinion	27	27

Table 23

Program of Sex Education in Schools

Opinion	% of Population		% of Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
At elementary level	39	61*	32	68*
At junior high level	69*	31	70*	30
At senior high level	75*	25	84*	16

teaching of this subject at the high school level, although a clear majority was also in favor of it being taught at the junior high school level.

The drug situation was viewed as a serious problem in St. Paul Schools by both public and teachers alike (see Table 11). As a partial remedy to this situation, the public and teachers were very much in favor of a drug education program in schools (see Table 24). The level at which it should be commenced was not, however, queried.

Table 24

Should Drug Education Be Offered In Schools

%age of Population		%age of Teachers	
Yes	No	Yes	No
87*	13	88*	12

Preschool and Adult Education

Preschool and adult education are recent developments in St. Paul. The public and teachers indicated strong support of kindergarten. Both groups indicated that kindergarten should definitely continue to operate (see Table 25). However, there was a strong feeling that it should remain on a half day basis and not be extended to a full day basis. Teachers clearly indicated that (a) attendance should not be made compulsory, and (b) that all teachers of kindergarten should have a teaching certificate; the public was divided on these concerns. The kindergarten program must be viewed as being relatively solvent and adequate because both groups did not feel that more money is required for this program and as a result there was no clear consensus among the respondents of either group on the issue of raising more money through local taxation.

The public of St. Paul is clearly behind continuation of a public supported day care centre; however, teachers are not quite certain (see Table 26).

Table 25

Kindergarten in St. Paul

Opinion	Percent of Population Yes	No	Percent of Teachers Yes	No
Kindergarten should definitely continue	85*	15	88*	12
Attendance should be made compulsory	44	56	28	72*
More money and resources are necessary	49	51	56	44
All teachers of kindergarten should have a teaching certificate	56	44	79*	21
If necessary, additional money should be raised for kindergarten through local taxation	42	58	42	58
Now kindergarten operates on a half day basis; it should be extended to a full day basis	20	80*	12	88*

Table 26

Should A Day Care Centre Continue

%age of Population Yes	No	No opinion	%age of Teachers Yes	No	No opinion
66*	21	13	49	18	33

Both the public and teachers were strongly in favor of more courses being offered to adults even at the expense of increased local levy despite the fact that they were strongly opposed to bearing increased property taxation for elementary and secondary education (see Tables 15 and

Table 27

Credit and Non-Credit Adult Courses

Opinion	Percent of Population Yes	Percent of Population No	Percent of Teachers Yes	Percent of Teachers No
More courses should be offered for adults	66*	34	81*	19
The School Boards should offer facilities free of charge for adult courses	38	62*	49	51
Adults should pay greater tuition fees to offset the cost of these courses	57	43	54	46
The government should pay allowances to adults when they are taking these courses	51	49	26	74*
Some of the costs of these courses should be borne by local taxation	22	78*	23	77*

27). Although the public is split in their opinion on whether government allowances should be paid to adults taking these courses, teachers were very much against such allowances. Teachers, on the other hand, demonstrated no clear opinion on whether Boards should not offer school facilities free of charge to adults; whereas the public felt relatively strongly that school facilities should be provided by boards gratis for adult classes. It appears that approximately half of the teachers and public would like to see adult students pay larger fees for adult classes, while the other half would like to see fees remain as is or be lowered.

External Evaluation of Students

Since the abolition by the Alberta Department of Education of Grade IX external examinations about 12 years ago, and the more recent abolition of Grade XII examinations, much controversy has arisen about the impact of these actions on school standards, student motivation, and quality of instruction. The teachers in St. Paul Schools, despite the Alberta Teachers Association's support of abolition, strongly favor reinstatement of both Grade IX and Grade XII standardized Department of Education examinations (see Tables 28 and 29). There was no clear consensus amongst the public on either issue; however, 45% opposed and 30% favored reinstatement of Grade IX examinations; whereas, only 36% opposed but 45% favored reinstatement of Grade XII examinations.

Table 28

Grade XII Department Examinations
Should be Reinstated

%age of Population			%age of Teachers		
Favor	Oppose	No opinion	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
45	36	19	77*	21	2

Table 29

Grade IX Department Examinations
Should be Reinstated

%age of Population			%age of Teachers		
Favor	Oppose	No opinion	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
39	45	16	73*	25	2

Community School Facilities Sharing

After almost a decade of negotiations, a formal agreement was reached in 1974 between Town Council and the three School Boards for free sharing and use of recreational and educational facilities. Public representatives should no longer fear that they do not have support for such an agreement because both the public and teachers almost unanimously favored the luxury of maximum exchange and utilization of educational and recreational facilities (see Table 30).

Table 30

Cost-Free Recreational and Educational
Facility Sharing

%age of Population			%age of Teachers		
Favor	Oppose	No opinion	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
75*	14	11	86*	9	5

Study II - Home Index Questionnaire

Despite the fact that only the top 20% of those respondents who scored "Yes" and the bottom 20% of the group who scored "Yes" on the Home Index Questionnaire were defined as high and low socio-economic groups and despite the high test re-test reliability (r = .966) of the instrument, no significant differences in response patterns between the two groups to any item of the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 were found. To get a significant difference at the 95% confidence level, Table II was utilized at N = 20 and a 54% difference between responses of each group was required before the difference could be interpreted as real and not due to chance or sampling error.

The differences between the two groups to each question ranged from 8% to 37.8%. The two groups differed 20% or more on 13 out of the 123 possible responses on the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976.

The items of the Home Index Questionnaire which appear to discriminate between the high and low socio-economic classifications for this study are indicated in Table 31. For example, having a piano or organ in the family was most often scored by members who were classified as the higher socio-economic group whereas having fewer than 6 people leving at home discriminated minimally between the two groups.

Table 31

Percentage Differences Between High Socio-Economic and Low Socio-Economic Groups Scoring "Yes" Responses on the Home Index Questionnaire

Question	Percentage Difference
Does your family own two or more family highway vehicles?	47.0
Does your family have a garage that will hold two or more cars?	58.0
Did the male head of your family attend a college, university, technical, or other post-secondary school?	58.5
Did the female head of your family attend a college, university, technical or other post-secondary school?	35.3
Did your family leave Alberta for a holiday in the last 3 years?	27.3
Did any member of your household fly anywhere in the last 2 years?	51.3
Do you have two or more phones in your home (extensions included)?	59.2
Are bedrooms in your home carpeted?	47.8
Do you have a coloured T.V. in your home?	32.0
Do you have a set of encyclopedias in your home?	47.6
Did your family borrow books from the public library in the last one year?	47.3
Does your family own any of the following: truck camper, camping trailer, motor home or lake cottage?	57.5
Does your family subscribe to a daily newspaper?	31.0
Is any adult member of your family (at home), presently a member of any executive committee (Council, Board, Club, Association, etc.)?	67.3
Does your family have a piano or organ?	77.3
Are there fewer than 6 people living in your home presently?	7.3
Does your family own a snowmobile?	63.5
Is there an automatic dishwasher in your home?	76.7
Do you have a rumpus room in your basement?	58.8
Does your family generally go shopping to Edmonton more than once a year?	75.8

CHAPTER SEVEN

LIMITATIONS OF STUDIES AND I AND II

Study I - Public and Teacher Polls

Although the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 was carefully modelled on the reputable Gallup (1975) polls, and piloted before administration, there is a remote possibility that some of the questions were misconstrued or misinterpreted by the respondents during the interviews and therefore validity of the response patterns may have been affected. However, because of the very high rate of response, in most cases 100%, to questions, and very satisfactory reportings from interviewers in response to the researcher's questions of whether clarity problems existed during the interviews, it is felt that the validity and reliability of the instrument are very good.

The sample size for both the general and teacher populations are relatively small when compared to Gallup's and Brosseau's (1973) sample sizes of 1500 and 200 respectively. However, the larger sample proportions of 5 and 50 per cent representing the public and teacher finite populations in this study, and the much greater allowances for sampling error of percentage utilized, should have compensated for the smaller sample sizes, and thus maintained the estimated minimum 95% confidence level for interpretation

of the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 and the following generalization of findings to the finite public and teacher populations.

Because of the rather unique characteristics of the study populations on St. Paul and because opinions towards education tend to vary considerably over time, all generalizations in this study must be interpreted as the opinions of the public and teachers of St. Paul in the spring of 1976.

Study II - Home Index Questionnaire

The Home Index Questionnaire, although it was modelled closely on that of Elley (1961), was designed by the researcher with the St. Paul public in mind and therefore its wholesale applicability to other study populations in the future may not be feasible.

The small sub-samples utilized to define high and low socio-economic background for this study, sizes 24 and 25 respectively, resulted in utilizing somewhat large percentage margins, 54% in this case, before 95% confidence could be established. Utilization of much larger sub-samples may be warranted in a duplication of the same study. It is the researcher's opinion that larger sub-samples would have resulted in real differences of opinion between low and high socio-economic groups on some issues polled by the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976.

This study indicates that several items on the Home Index Questionnaire appear to have limited discriminating value.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Study I - Public and Teacher Poll

In addition to indicating that the St. Paul public and teachers held some strong views towards certain issues in education and that the two groups differed in opinion on some of these issues, Study I has revealed that it is financially realistic and expedient to gather information on how certain groups, as a whole, feel towards issues in education.

This study, for example, proved that a public opinion poll in a small urban centre can, with some careful planning, be administered, in three days and thus provide an almost instant reading on the pulse of public opinion on specific issues. It also proved that, with a well-developed interviewer's Manual (see Appendix D) and a structured two and one-half hour training session, high school students can be trained to do the required polling smoothly, thoroughly and efficiently. The very high returns and general cooperation gained from the interviews also suggests that high school student interviewers, especially in a smaller community, do not arouse the suspicion and mistrust that adults would performing a similar function. Furthermore, the cooperation, eagerness and involvement of students as interviewers during the training session, the polling and

the general interest expressed in results of the poll, did, in the opinion of the instructor of the sociology class and the author, become a very legitimate and worthwhile learning experience for students in the context of an introductory sociology course.

The utilization of current census lists to choose samples based on a set of random members for this study has proven to be efficient and appropriate for selecting samples for poll purposes such as this one. Because census lists are usually fairly accurate in enumerating all residents in a defined geographic or political area according to age, sex, occupation, and which school system is supported, and because educational boundaries usually match census area, a check for gross randomness of the sample on a variety of characteristics can readily be made. As well, the currentness and usual thoroughness of these lists does provide some certainty that the whole finite population is represented in the sample.

The findings of the polls in this study were, however, of most interest.

Comparison of the responses of the public and teacher polls indicated that the views and attitudes of St. Paul teachers toward education were generally very similar and often identical to those of the St. Paul public. This finding suggests, therefore, that the concerns of both groups are generally common and, in most cases, unrelated to vested interest and that, in future endeavors, polling the

opinion of one group can result in fairly accurate generalizations about the opinions of the other group. On only seven items of the poll did teachers significantly differ in opinion from the public; and these mostly related to the teachers preferential position to gain information about education and working conditions. Unlike the public, teachers felt that they were well informed about what goes on in the schools and somewhat better informed about what the school boards are doing. Contrary to the public's opinion, teachers felt, as a group, that teacher lack of interest and ability to teach were not problems with which the community should be concerned; that classes sizes are too large; that parents do not participate or take interest in school activities and programs; that reduction of amount of preparation time for teachers was not the most suitable means of extending the education dollar; and that not too much emphasis is being placed on preparing students for college or for occupations that do not require a college degree.

This part of the study also demonstrates that small vocal groups who often apply most pressure on school boards, administrators and education policies through attendance at board meetings, through news media and delegations to administration are often not representing the wishes, attitudes and opinions of the larger groups for which they claim to speak. In recent years, for example, there have been notable representations in St. Paul to school boards and administration, speaking out against

corporal punishment and disciplinary action within schools generally; sex and drug education programs; free sharing of recreational and educational facilities; adult education; kindergarten and day care centres. This study suggests that the public and teachers of St. Paul, on the whole, do not share opinions and attitudes of these groups and in fact want much structure and discipline, sex and drug education programs, free exchange of educational and recreational facilities, and tax supported kindergarten and day care programs.

This information about how the total public feels on certain issues does provide Boards and Administrators some security and a realistic information base on which to resist small group pressure for decision making. To some pressure groups, it may be indeed worthwhile to lend a deaf ear.

School boards and professional educators are often in a position to be more knowledgeable about education needs and trends than the public and at times even teaching staff, and they are sometimes faced with the situation of making certain decisions which the public may not currently support or be ready to accept. Accurate feedback, as to which decisions or policies are acceptable can arouse these decision makers to launch a campaign, through debate, or information dispersal, to change attitudes and to solicit support apriori or post mortem. In St. Paul, for example, school boards made the decision four years ago to allocate consi-

derable money and energy for the promotion of educational television and video tape recording equipment, facilities and the personnel to operate these facilities. This study, however, indicated that neither teachers nor the public see this development as desirable or worthy of expansion and helpful in the education of students for life and employment. It, therefore, seems to behoove school boards and those in education desiring such a service to either show teachers and the public how television and VTR can be beneficial to providing a sounder education, or to abandon the project.

Knowing, with some certainty, what the public will or will not support can provide boards and school personnel with some courage to take firm and decisive stands on certain issues. The problem in education that was viewed with highest concern by the St. Paul public was discipline. According to results of this study, it is very apparent that the public and teachers of St. Paul viewed disciplinary measures, behavior expectations of students in school, and academic performance levels as too lax and laissez-faire. The public and teachers alike would adamantly support policies and actions to give teachers more disciplinary authority, reduction of general freedom to students, stricter enforcement of existing and new rules, greater punishment of vandals, and development of ways and means to co-opt parents into supporting discipline in the school. In addition, teachers, despite the Alberta Teacher

Association's stand, felt that removal of standardized examinations at the Grade IX and XII levels was not educationally sound and would overwhelmingly support reinstatement of these examinations.

The public and teachers of St. Paul concurred with the prevalent attitude of western society that maximal education opportunity should be made available to every human being from cradle to grave.

Several suggested alternatives to modify programs, facilities and policies to meet needs of students who were currently not interested in school were definitely viewed as very desirable to the alternative of expulsion of these students. Despite the fact that the public feels sufficient funds from local taxation are provided for primary and secondary education, the public would appear to be willing to increase local funding for day care centres, kindergarten and adult education.

The public's general message to school boards about primary and secondary education is that they were not in favor of increasing educational budgets through taxation of real property. On the other hand, the public is not in favor of reducing educational costs by reducing or lowering in quality too many existing programs or services. If reductions were to be made, drama, music and extra-curricular activity programs would likely meet with least resistance. It would, therefore, appear that the St. Paul public expects their elected board members to stretch or utilize

more efficiently the existing educational budgets. It is clearly evident that the public of St. Paul in the spring of 1976 would have most likely defeated any plebiscite to increase the local mill rate for purposes of primary and secondary educational purposes.

Because this study shows that it is possible to poll a public very cheaply and efficiently by utilization of high school students; that the polling process can be a valid and educative experience for high school sociology students; and that the analysis of the poll can become a highly structured and simple task through computer utilization, a poll such as this can be conducted on an annual or some other regular basis.

Study II - Home Index Questionnaire

Although this part of the study did not find that the low and high socio-economic groups as defined by the Home Index Questionnaire differed in opinion on educational issues as presented in the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976, several interesting conclusions can, nevertheless, be made.

In the past socio-economic classification was often based on dollars and cents annual or net worth of individuals or families.

Blishen (1968) and Elley (1961) for example report that the public is generally averse to pollsters or questionnaires querying annual income or net worth of individuals. If it can be argued that net worth or income of

respondents can be estimated by the number of personal amenities and costly activities a respondent has or is involved in, then the Home Index Questionnaire is a feasible alternative in classifying respondents on a socio-economic base. There was a 100% completion rate of the questionnaire which indicates that respondents do not mind answering "Yes" or "No" to specific questions about whether they have or have not certain luxury items in the home or whether they are or are not involved in certain types of activities which require money.

This study also indicates that respondents do not endeavor to bias their responses to specific questions vicariously related to socio-economic level as evidenced by the high test re-test reliability of responses after a three week interval.

Operating on the assumption that the Home Index Questionnaire does in fact classify respondents on a socio-economic scale and in view of the fact that no differences were found in opinions towards educational issues between the two groups as measured by the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976, several conclusions can be made.

The amount of exposure the public receives through first hand contact, television and newspaper coverage and through personal, formal and informal information exchange about education, may no longer be related to socio-economic status. Thus, the farmer with a grade two education irrespective of whether he has a large or small income, can be as

equally and thoroughly exposed to the same contacts and information about education and thus hold the same opinions and biases towards education as, for example, a lawyer. In short, socio-economic background may no longer be a valid criterion for classifying publics as to the amount of information they have or opinions they hold towards education. If there are differences or values that do exist between groups of different socio-economic backgrounds, there is no evidence in this study that socio-economic status materializes in different views towards educational issues.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has found that no significant differences of opinion towards education exist between two St. Paul groups of apparently different socio-economic backgrounds. Duplicating the study or perhaps a sample of 500 subjects and analyzing the data on such criteria as sex, educational level, religious affiliation, ethnic background, and degree of involvement in school may result in interesting findings as to what opinion differences, if any, these sub-groups hold toward education.

Increasing the sample sizes for both studies would also more positively confirm or disprove the finding of this study that no differences of opinions exist toward educational issues between different socio-economic groups. Non significant differences of opinions between the two groups

in this study may only be due to the large percentage differences required at 95% confidence with small samples.

The validity of the Home Index Questionnaire to measure socio-economic level or annual incomes of respondents could be researched by correlating responses on the questionnaire with actual incomes of respondents.

It is the general impression of the researcher that some questions on the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 may be too lengthy and cumbersome, especially for the non-educated respondent. Future researchers in this area of endeavor should pay special attention to keeping questions and their stems as concise as possible.

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APPENDIX A

Faculty of Education
The University of Alberta
Edmonton, Canada T6G 2G5
Spring, 1976

Dear Citizen of St. Paul,

It is universally recognized that good decisions are based on accurate information. Board members, administrators, teachers and everybody else involved in the education process are especially interested in how decisions, policies, programs, approaches and many other relevant activities are viewed by the people they affect, namely the Public.

A student in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Alberta working in the Department of Educational Psychology and in conjunction with the St. Paul School Districts is conducting a study which will attempt to find out what the people of St. Paul think of their school systems.

Your name has been randomly selected from among the 2667 adults appearing on the 1975 St. Paul Census and you will, in the next few days, have a trained volunteer interview you at home about some of your individual views about educational matters in your community. Because the interview will only take about 20 minutes of your time; because all your answers will be kept strictly confidential; and because nearly all people interested in their community usually enjoy talking about their views on education, it is anticipated that the interviewer will receive your cooperation and input.

Interviewers will be instructed to limit their interview hours to between 4:00 and 9:30 p.m. and will respect your request for them to call back at another time if they arrive at an inconvenient time.

Should you not want, for some reason, to be interviewed, kindly phone 645-4153 and so advise the interviewer when he/she comes to your door.

Besides general publications through press releases, a summary of the findings will be available to you on request.

Confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed!

A sincere thank you for your anticipated cooperation and support in this study.

Sincerely,

Dr. H. W. Zingle, Chairman,
Counsellor Education Program,
University of Alberta.

APPENDIX B

Wednesday, April 14, 1976

Dear Teacher of a St. Paul School,

Your name has been randomly selected from a list of teachers of all the school systems in St. Paul and you are humbly being requested to complete the enclosed questionnaire with the interviewer. The questionnaire attempts to get at opinions held by the teachers and public of St. Paul, about a variety of possibly relevant and maybe controversial issues in education.

In order for the study to be valid, it is highly desirable that every member of the sample answer every question in the opinionaire. Many of the items are forced response type and require that you respond in a fashion that "more or most" closely represents your feelings/views.

Note that the questionnaire is uncoded, so your responses cannot be traced to you. In other words, personal confidentiality is guaranteed.

A sincere thank you for your anticipated assistance and cooperation in this study.

Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta

APPENDIX C

Faculty of Education
The University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T6G 2G5

Letter of Introduction

Spring, 1976

Re: St. Paul Poll of Education, 1976.

Interviewer's Name:

The holder of this letter is a volunteer assisting in a carefully designed study aimed at finding out what the people of St. Paul feel about their school systems.

He/She has received special training in interviewing for the St. Paul Poll of Education 1976 and requests your kind cooperation in answering a variety of questions about how you feel about certain aspects of the educational system in this community.

All your answers will be kept confidential!

A sincere thank you for your anticipated cooperation and support in this study.

Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEWERS' MANUAL

St. Paul Poll of Education, 1976

1) Forms

Check your packet to ascertain that all required forms are included:

a) List of addresses of persons to be interviewed.

b) Sufficient copies of the questionnaire for each of the persons on your interview list, with an unmarked envelope for the questionnaire when it is complete.

c) A completed letter of introduction.

2) Interview Schedules

a) All interviews shall be conducted from to , 1976.

b) Interview only after 4:00 p.m. and stop by 9:30 p.m. DO NOT attempt to interview during other hours; doing so will result in possible irritation of interviewees, and increased absences of interviewees from home.

3) Who can be interviewed?

a) Only those people listed on your list.

b) Should the person on your list be excessively drunk, very senile or have serious language or communication handicap, diplomatically decline to interview him/her.

4) Uncooperative Interviewees

If an interviewer approaches his/her interviewees positively and with the expectation that he/she will get an interview, he/she usually does. However, for various reasons interviewers sometimes meet situations of:

a) Refusal

Should you meet a blank refusal, do not "push" or argue. Note this on your address list and seek a replacement interview from replacement names on your list.

b) Break-off

Even after gentle urging some interviewees refuse to cooperate after a certain question which they may find personally offensive or stop responding for some reason part of the way through an interview. In such cases, destroy the partially completed questionnaire and seek an interview from the replacement list.

5) Replacement List

Each of your lists has a "Replacement List" of names appearing at the bottom of the page. This list has been also randomly drawn and is to be used to replace interviews only when:

a) a break-off has occurred

b) refusal has been met

c) or it is impossible to interview a person on the main list for reasons outlined in 3(b) above.

6) Telephone Interviews

The whole study has been designed for interviews in households on a face-to-face basis. Telephone interviews are not acceptable.

7) Return of Questionnaires

a) When you finish an interview, and in the interviewee's presence, seal the questionnaire in the envelope provided.

b) Upon completion of all your interviews, return all the materials to the poll leader assigned to you. This should include:

i) The interviewing list with proper notations, indicating successful and unsuccessful interviews;

ii) All the completed and sealed questionnaires.

8) Interviewing Technique

a) Display sincerity and politeness, yet do so with confidence and decisiveness.

b) Be thoroughly familiar with the wording of questions and required responses.

c) Carry only materials that you will need for the interview to avoid looking like a door-to-door salesman.

d) Do not change the statements in the questionnaire through rephrasing or interpretation. It is only the interviewees' opinions that are wanted, therefore stay impartial.

e) Use a clip-board or some other hard surface or easily manageable surface.

f) Encourage the interviewee not to skip any question since it is important that responses are received for each question. If the interviewee refuses to answer a question, write "refused" in the answer space.

9) Commencing the Interview

a) Introduce yourself and show your letter of introduction.

b) Mention the letter that was mailed a few days ago and politely suggest that you would like about 20 minutes of the person's time to answer questions for the St. Paul Poll of Education.

c) If it appears that you have arrived at an inopportune time (e.g. family in midst of supper, or person you wish to interview is on his/her way out to a meeting, etc.), suggest that you could come back later in the evening or another evening.

d) Most people like to be interviewed, especially about something they have knowledge about, so relax and anticipate cooperation.

e) There are no right or wrong answers. If you are not sure how you should codify a response, ask the interviewee to rephrase his/her answer to fit into one of the forced responses.

f) Before leaving express your appreciation for the respondent's time and interest.

NOTES:

APPENDIX E

ST. PAUL POLL OF EDUCATION, 1976

Please complete each of the following questions.

It is important that you answer EVERY question.

1. Do you feel that you are generally well-informed about what goes on in the schools? Yes___(1) No___(2) (1)

2. Is there a need for more communication between the schools and the parents and the community in general? Yes___(1) No___(2) (2)

3. There are several suggested ways in which communication between home, school and community may be increased or maintained. In your opinion would the following ways be useful, helpful or realistic in St. Paul? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) open-house days	___(1)	___(2)	(3)
b) frequent report cards	___(1)	___(2)	(4)
c) opportunities to meet the teachers individually about your children	___(1)	___(2)	(5)
d) a school newsletter	___(1)	___(2)	(6)
e) articles in the newspaper .	___(1)	___(2)	(7)
f) parent-teacher days	___(1)	___(2)	(8)
g) coverage by radio and television	___(1)	___(2)	(9)

4. Are you well enough informed about what the school board is doing? Yes___(1) No___(2) (10)

5. In your opinion which is the best way to inform the public about what the school board is doing? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) newspaper articles about school board decisions and policies	___(1)	___(2)	(11)
b) print the minutes of each board meeting in the local paper	___(1)	___(2)	(12)

	Yes	No	
c) a newsletter once in a while to explain policies and what the board is doing	___(1)	___(2)	(13)
d) more board initiated public forums	___(1)	___(2)	(14)

6. Which of the answers following would best describe your general opinions about education in St. Paul?

very good	___(1)	(15)
satisfactory	___(2)	
poor	___(3)	
no opinion	___(4)	

7. Do you think that the following issues are problems with which the schools in this community must deal? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) Finances	___(1)	___(2)	(16)
b) Discipline	___(1)	___(2)	(17)
c) Facilities	___(1)	___(2)	(18)
d) Dope - drugs	___(1)	___(2)	(19)
e) Teachers' lack of interest/ ability	___(1)	___(2)	(20)
f) Parents' lack of interest	___(1)	___(2)	(21)
g) School administration	___(1)	___(2)	(22)
h) Curriculum	___(1)	___(2)	(23)
i) Pupils' lack of interest .	___(1)	___(2)	(24)
j) Vandalism	___(1)	___(2)	(25)
k) Disrespect for teachers ..	___(1)	___(2)	(26)
l) School Board policies	___(1)	___(2)	(27)
m) Using new/up-to-date methods	___(1)	___(2)	(28)
n) We have no problems	___(1)	___(2)	(29)

8. In your opinion, in what ways are your schools particularly good? Mark your choice with an X. (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) Teachers	___(1)	___(2)	(30)
b) Curriculum	___(1)	___(2)	(31)
c) Facilities	___(1)	___(2)	(32)
d) Up-to-date teaching methods	___(1)	___(2)	(33)
e) Extra-curricular activities	___(1)	___(2)	(34)
f) Small class sizes	___(1)	___(2)	(35)
g) Good administration	___(1)	___(2)	(36)
h) Good student-teacher relationships	___(1)	___(2)	(37)

	Yes	No	
i) Parents are interested/ participate	___(1)	___(2)	(38)
j) Discipline	___(1)	___(2)	(39)
k) Transportation system	___(1)	___(2)	(40)
l) Equal opportunity for all .	___(1)	___(2)	(41)
m) Nothing good	___(1)	___(2)	(42)

9. Do you think too many educational changes are being tried, or not enough?

Too many	___(1)	(43)
Not enough	___(2)	
About right	___(3)	
Don't know	___(4)	

10. Some people feel that too much emphasis is placed in the high schools on preparing students for college and not enough emphasis on preparing students for occupations that do not require a college degree. Do you agree or disagree?

Agree	___(1)	(44)
Disagree	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

11. Do you think that schools are preparing students well enough for life and employment?

Yes	___(1)	(45)
No	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

12. If you think schools are not preparing students well enough for life and employment, what improvements could be made? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) more emphasis on basic subjects	___(1)	___(2)	(46)
b) more discipline	___(1)	___(2)	(47)
c) relating school to employment situations	___(1)	___(2)	(48)
d) more vocational courses ...	___(1)	___(2)	(49)
e) a greater variety of courses	___(1)	___(2)	(50)
f) allowing more freedom to students to develop initiative	___(1)	___(2)	(51)
g) greater use of television in schools for educational programs	___(1)	___(2)	(52)
h) more visits to industry, museums, exchange visits, etc.	___(1)	___(2)	(53)
i) part-time employment during school at the high-school level	___(1)	___(2)	(54)

13. How do you feel about discipline in the schools? Is it too strict, not strict enough, or just about right?

Too strict	___(1)	(55)
Not strict enough	___(2)	
Just about right	___(3)	
Don't know	___(4)	

14. If "not strict enough", can you tell me what you mean? In what way is discipline not strict enough? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) Teachers lack authority ..	___(1)	___(2)	(56)
b) Students have too much freedom	___(1)	___(2)	(57)
c) Disrespect for teachers ..	___(1)	___(2)	(58)
d) Rules are not enforced ...	___(1)	___(2)	(59)
e) Dress code is too liberal	___(1)	___(2)	(60)
f) Vandalism is not punished strictly enough	___(1)	___(2)	(61)
g) Parents are not interested in supporting school discipline	___(1)	___(2)	(62)

15. When some children do poorly in school, some people place the blame on the children, some on the children's home life, some on the school, and some on the teachers. Of course, all of these things share in the blame, but where would you place the <u>chief</u> blame? Choose one answer.

Children	___(1)	(63)
Home life	___(2)	
School	___(3)	
Teachers	___(4)	
No opinion	___(5)	

16. Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school. What should be done in these cases? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) Special classes for all who are not interested ...	___(1)	___(2)	(64)
b) Expel them	___(1)	___(2)	(65)
c) Offer better/more interesting curriculum/teaching methods	___(1)	___(2)	(66)
d) Special counselling	___(1)	___(2)	(67)
e) Harsher discipline	___(1)	___(2)	(68)
f) Vocational training	___(1)	___(2)	(69)

	Yes	No	
g) Make their parents responsible	___(1)	___(2)	(70)
h) Put in school for problem students	___(1)	___(2)	(71)
i) Teacher should take more interest in such students	___(1)	___(2)	(72)

17. Do you think there should be a program of sex education in the schools?

	Yes	No	
a) at the elementary level ..	___(1)	___(2)	(73)
b) at the junior high level .	___(1)	___(2)	(74)
c) at the senior high level .	___(1)	___(2)	(75)

18. Do you think there should be a drug education program in the schools? Yes___(1) No___(2) (76)

19. Would you favour or oppose volunteer help in the schools to help teachers?

Favour	___(1)	(77)
Oppose	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

20. Suppose the schools said they needed much more money. As you feel at this time, would you vote to raise taxes for this purpose, or would you vote against raising taxes for this purpose?

Favour	___(1)	(78)
Oppose	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

21. Would you like to see the students in schools given provincial or national tests so that their educational achievement could be compared with students in other communities?

Favour	___(1)	(79)
Oppose	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

22. Suppose your school board were forced to cut some school costs because there is not enough money. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following actions:

	Agree	Disagree	
a) reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes, say up to 30 students per class	___(1)	___(2)	(80)

	Agree	Disagree	
b) reduce the number of teachers by reducing the number of programs such as music, drama, physical education, etc.	___(1)	___(2)	(81)
c) cut out kindergarten	___(1)	___(2)	(82)
d) reduce janitorial and maintenance services	___(1)	___(2)	(83)
e) reduce the amount of supplies and materials the teachers use in the classroom	___(1)	___(2)	(84)
f) reduce special programs such as counselling and special classes	___(1)	___(2)	(85)
g) reduce the amount of preparation time for teachers during school hours	___(1)	___(2)	(86)
h) reduce the number of administrative personnel	___(1)	___(2)	(87)
i) reduce the amount of salary increases to teachers	___(1)	___(2)	(88)
j) reduce overlapping expenses by amalgamating school systems	___(1)	___(2)	(89)

23. If finances and resources made it necessary that the number of programs offered should be reduced, which should be eliminated or reduced? (Answer all).

	Yes	No	
a) music	___(1)	___(2)	(90)
b) drama	___(1)	___(2)	(91)
c) physical education	___(1)	___(2)	(92)
d) industrial arts and home economics	___(1)	___(2)	(93)
e) extra-curricular activities	___(1)	___(2)	(94)
f) vocational courses	___(1)	___(2)	(95)
g) academic subjects	___(1)	___(2)	(96)
h) commercial or business courses	___(1)	___(2)	(97)
i) second language courses (other than English)	___(1)	___(2)	(98)
j) counselling services	___(1)	___(2)	(99)

24. Strong suggestions are being made that Department of Education Examinations at the Grade 12 level be reinstated. How do you feel about this?

Favour	___(1)	(100)
Oppose	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

25. Other suggestions are that Department of Education Grade IX examinations should be reinstated. How do you feel?

Favour	___(1)	(101)
Oppose	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

26. There is an agreement between the Town of St. Paul and the School Boards to utilize each other's recreational facilities without charge. How do you feel about this?

Favour	___(1)	(102)
Oppose	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

27. Should a day-care centre continue to operate in St. Paul?

Yes	___(1)	(103)
No	___(2)	
No opinion	___(3)	

28. In the last several years there has been considerable emphasis, both in time and effort, on Adult Education in St. Paul. By Adult Education we mean courses, offered to adults for High School credit, hobby courses, post-secondary school courses, skill or trade courses, and other short or long-term courses offered to adults. Future predictions are that there will be more money and resources directed towards Adult Education. In terms of this, how do you feel about the following statements?

	Yes	No	
a) more courses should be offered for adults	___(1)	___(2)	(104)
b) the School Boards should offer facilities free of charge for adult courses	___(1)	___(2)	(105)
c) adults should pay greater tuition fees to offset the costs of these courses ...	___(1)	___(2)	(106)
d) the government should pay allowances to adults when they are taking these courses	___(1)	___(2)	(107)
e) some of the costs of these courses should be borne by local taxation	___(1)	___(2)	(108)

Comments re: statements above, if any:

29. Kindergarten has functioned in St. Paul for several years. How do you feel about each of the following statements:

	Yes	No	
a) Kindergarten should definitely continue	___(1)	___(2)	(109)
b) attendance should be made compulsory	___(1)	___(2)	(110)
c) more money and resources are necessary	___(1)	___(2)	(111)
d) all teachers of kindergarten should have a teaching certificate	___(1)	___(2)	(112)
e) if necessary, additional money should be raised for kindergarten through local taxation	___(1)	___(2)	(113)
f) now kindergarten operates on a half-day basis; it should be extended to a full-day basis	___(1)	___(2)	(114)

PERSONAL DATA

30. What St. Paul schools are the children in your family attending or have attended in the last five years?

a) Glen Avon	___(1)	(115)
b) St. Paul Elementary	___(2)	
c) Racette	___(3)	
d) St. Paul Regional	___(4)	
e) Have no children, are too young to attend, have attended more than 5 years ago, or have attended schools outside St. Paul	___(5)	

31. You are:

a) man	___(1)	(116)
b) woman	___(2)	

32. Education (last grade completed):

a) less than Grade X	___(1)	(117)
b) Grades X, XI or XII completed	___(2)	
c) post-secondary program of 2 or fewer years completed	___(3)	
d) post-secondary program of more than 2 years completed	___(4)	

33. Your age:

a) 19 - 29	___(1)	(118)
b) 30 - 49	___(2)	
c) 50 years and over	___(3)	

34. You are:

a) Catholic	___(1)	(119)
b) Protestant	___(2)	
c) Other	___(3)	

35. In the last two years, have you attended, in St. Paul:

a) a parent-teacher day	___(1)	(120)
b) an adult education course of 3 sessions or longer	___(2)	
c) sat in on a class of your son or daughter	___(3)	
d) none of the above	___(4)	

36. What is your ethnic background?

a) French	___(1)	(121)
b) Slavic (Uk., Pol., Czech., Yug., Russ., etc.)	___(2)	
c) Other (Specify: _____)	___(3)	

37. Do you generally speak the language of your ethnic origin in your household?

Yes	___(1)	(122)
No	___(2)	

APPENDIX F

HOME INDEX QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Following each question is a "yes" or "no". Put a circle around the "yes" or "no", indicating how that question applies to your family. It is important that you answer all questions.

1. Does your family own two or more family highway vehicles?	Yes	No
2. Does your family have a garage that will hold two or more cars?	Yes	No
3. Did the male head of your family attend a college, university, technical, or other post-secondary school?	Yes	No
4. Did the female head of your family attend a college, university, technical or other post-secondary school?	Yes	No
5. Did your family leave Alberta for a holiday in the last 3 years?	Yes	No
6. Did any member of your household fly anywhere in the last 2 years?	Yes	No
7. Do you have two or more phones in your home (extensions included)?	Yes	No
8. Are bedrooms in your home carpeted?	Yes	No
9. Do you have a coloured T.V. in your home?	Yes	No
10. Do you have a set of encyclopedias in your home?	Yes	No
11. Did your family borrow books from the public library in the last one year?	Yes	No
12. Does your family own any of the following: truck camper, camping trailer, motor home or lake cottage?	Yes	No
13. Does your family subscribe to a daily newspaper?	Yes	No
14. Is any adult member of your family (at home), presently a member of any executive committee (Council, Board, Club, Association, etc.)?	Yes	No
15. Does your family have a piano or organ?	Yes	No
16. Are there fewer than 6 people living in your home presently?	Yes	No
17. Does your family own a snowmobile?	Yes	No
18. Is there an automatic dishwasher in your home?	Yes	No
19. Do you have a rumpus room in your basement?	Yes	No
20. Does your family generally go shopping to Edmonton more than once a year?	Yes	No

APPENDIX G

ST. PAUL POLL OF EDUCATION, 1976

PERCENTAGE POPULATION (N = 126) AND TEACHER (N = 57) SAMPLE RESPONSES

Please complete each of the following questions. It is important that you answer EVERY question.

	(Teacher Responses in brackets)	
1. Do you feel that you are generally well informed about what goes on in the schools?	Yes 36(74)	No 64(26)
2. Is there a need for more communication between the schools and the parents and the community in general?	Yes 86(91)	No 14(9)
3. There are several suggested ways in which communication between home, school and community may be increased or maintained. In your opinion would the following ways be useful, helpful or realistic in St. Paul? (Answer all).	Yes	No
a) open-house days	88(69)	12(31)
b) frequent report cards	64(49)	36(51)
c) opportunities to meet the teachers individually about your children	90(98)	10(2)
d) a school newsletter	69(67)	31(33)
e) articles in the newspaper	68(79)	32(21)
f) parent-teacher days	83(93)	17(7)
g) coverage by radio and television	58(56)	42(44)
4. Are you well enough informed about what the school board is doing?	Yes 16(53)	No 84(47)
5. In your opinion which is the best way to inform the public about what the school board is doing? (Answer all).	Yes	No
a) newspaper articles about school board decisions and policies ..	86(90)	14(10)
b) print the minutes of each board meeting in the local paper	71(75)	29(25)

	Yes	No
c) a newsletter once in a while to explain policies and what the board is doing	84(86)	16(14)
d) more board initiated public forums	53(61)	47(39)

6. Which of the answers following would best describe your general opinions about education in St. Paul?	very good	14(19)
	satisfactory	62(74)
	poor	13(7)
	no opinion	11(0)

7. Do you think that the following issues are problems with which the schools in this community must deal? (Answer all).	Yes	No
a) Finances	78(81)	22(19)
b) Discipline	84(77)	16(23)
c) Facilities	52(47)	48(53)
d) Dope - drugs	84(81)	16(19)
e) Teachers' lack of interest/ ability	66(35)	44(65)
f) Parents' lack of interest	77(84)	23(16)
g) School administration	56(51)	44(49)
h) Curriculum	55(63)	45(37)
i) Pupils' lack of interest	79(79)	21(21)
j) Vandalism	65(40)	35(60)
k) Disrespect for teachers	79(75)	21(25)
l) School Board policies	62(65)	38(35)
m) Using new/up-to-date methods ..	50(58)	50(42)
n) We have no problems	36(21)	64(79)

8. In your opinion, in what ways are your schools particularly good? Mark your choice with an X. (Answer all).	Yes	No
a) Teachers	71(93)	29(7)
b) Curriculum	68(68)	32(32)
c) Facilities	82(75)	18(25)
d) Up-to-date teaching methods ..	69(72)	31(28)
e) Extra-curricular activities ..	69(49)	31(51)
f) Small class sizes	62(25)	38(75)
g) Good administration	58(68)	42(32)
h) Good student-teacher relationships	52(70)	48(30)
i) Parents are interested/ participate	40(17)	60(83)
j) Discipline	53(40)	47(60)
k) Transportation system	82(84)	18(16)
l) Equal opportunity for all	76(68)	24(32)
m) Nothing good	27(16)	73(84)

9. Do you think too many educational changes are being tried, or not enough?	Too many	29(21)
	Not enough	18(5)
	About right	37(60)
	Don't know	16(14)
10. Some people feel that too much emphasis is placed in the high schools on preparing students for college and not enough emphasis on preparing students for occupations that do not require a college degree. Do you agree or disagree?	Agree	47(17)
	Disagree	35(68)
	No opinion	18(15)
11. Do you think that schools are preparing students well enough for life and employment?	Yes	41(28)
	No	50(60)
	No opinion	9(12)

12. If you think schools are not preparing students well enough for life and employment, what improvements could be made? (Answer all).

	Yes	No
a) more emphasis on basic subjects	74(79)	26(21)
b) more discipline	61(72)	39(28)
c) relating school to employment situations	64(70)	36(30)
d) more vocational courses	55(40)	45(60)
e) a greater variety of courses .	48(37)	52(63)
f) allowing more freedom to students to develop initiative ..	46(48)	54(52)
g) greater use of television in schools for educational programs	38(21)	62(79)
h) more visits to industry, museums, exchange visits, etc.	55(58)	45(42)
i) part-time employment during school at the high school level	56(68)	44(32)

13. How do you feel about discipline in the schools? Is it too strict, not strict enough or just about right?	Too strict	32(33)
	Not strict enough	60(65)
	Just about right	8(0)
	Don't know	0(2)

14. If "not strict enough", can you tell me what you mean? In what way is discipline not strict enough? (Answer all).

	Yes	No

	Yes	No
a) Teachers lack authority	78(78)	22(22)
b) Students have too much freedom	75(75)	25(25)
c) Disrespect for teachers	79(75)	21(25)
d) Rules are not enforced	75(70)	25(30)
e) Dress code is too liberal	39(17)	61(83)
f) Vandalism is not punished strictly enough	69(61)	31(39)
g) Parents are not interested in supporting school discipline .	68(75)	32(25)

15. When some children do poorly in school, some people place the blame on the children, some on the children's home life, some on the school, and some on the teachers. Of course, all of these things share in the blame, but where would you place the chief blame? Choose one answer.

Children	14(12)
Home life	46(75)
School	4(2)
Teachers	9(0)
No opinion	27(11)

16. Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school. What should be done in these cases? (Answer all).

	Yes	No
a) Special classes for all who are not interested	67(32)	33(68)
b) Expel them	20(34)	80(66)
c) Offer better/more interesting curriculum/teaching methods ..	75(58)	25(42)
d) Special counselling	87(91)	13(9)
e) Harsher discipline	55(56)	45(44)
f) Vocational training	84(74)	16(26)
g) Make their parents responsible	51(68)	49(32)
h) Put in school for problem students	43(17)	57(83)
i) Teacher should take more interest in such students	71(60)	29(40)

17. Do you think there should be a program of sex education in the schools?

	Yes	No
a) at the elementary level	39(32)	61(68)
b) at the junior high level	69(70)	31(30)
c) at the senior high level	75(84)	25(16)

18. Do you think there should be a drug education program in the schools?	Yes 87(88)	No 13(12)
19. Would you favour or oppose volunteer help in the schools to help teachers?	Favour Oppose No opinion	61(68) 24(16) 15(16)
20. Suppose the schools said they needed much more money. As you feel at this time, would you vote to raise taxes for this purpose, or would you vote against raising taxes for this purpose?	Favour Oppose No opinion	32(51) 61(39) 7(10)
21. Would you like to see the students in schools given provincial or national tests so that their educational achievement could be compared with students in other communities?	Favour Oppose No opinion	47(72) 36(21) 17(7)

22. Suppose your school board were forced to cut some school costs because there is not enough money. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following actions:

	Agree	Disagree
a) reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes, say up to 30 students per class	33(7)	67(93)
b) reduce the number of teachers by reducing the number of programs such as music, drama, physical education, etc.	32(19)	68(81)
c) cut out kindergarten	29(30)	71(70)
d) reduce janitorial and maintenance services	27(23)	73(77)
e) reduce the amount of supplies and materials the teachers use in the classroom	53(39)	47(61)
f) reduce special programs such as counselling and special classes	32(49)	68(51)
g) reduce the amount of preparation time for teachers during school hours	56(25)	44(75)
h) reduce the number of administrative personnel	60(75)	40(25)

	Agree	Disagree
i) reduce the amount of salary increases to teachers	53(23)	47(77)
j) reduce overlapping expenses by amalgamating school systems ..	68(68)	32(32)

23. If finances and resources made it necessary that the number of programs offered should be reduced, which should be eliminated or reduced? (Answer all).	Yes	No
a) music	40(37)	60(63)
b) drama	60(65)	40(35)
c) physical education	25(7)	75(93)
d) industrial arts and home economics	21(16)	79(84)
e) extra-curricular activities ..	56(72)	44(28)
f) vocational courses	15(16)	85(84)
g) academic subjects	12(13)	88(97)
h) commercial or business courses	18(25)	82(75)
i) second language courses (other than English)	37(47)	63(53)
j) counselling services	29(47)	71(53)

24. Strong suggestions are being made that Department of Education Examinations at the Grade XII level be reinstated. How do you feel about this?	Favour	45(77)
	Oppose	36(21)
	No opinion	19(2)
25. Other suggestions are that Department of Education Grade IX examinations should be reinstated. How do you feel?	Favour	39(73)
	Oppose	45(25)
	No opinion	16(2)
26. There is an agreement between the Town of St. Paul and the School Boards to utilize each other's recreational facilities without charge. How do you feel about this?	Favour	75(86)
	Oppose	14(9)
	No opinion	11(5)
27. Should a day care centre continue to operate in St. Paul?	Yes	66(49)
	No	21(18)
	No opinion	13(33)

28. In the last several years there has been considerable emphasis, both in time and effort, on Adult Education in St. Paul. By Adult

Education we mean courses, offered to adults for High School credit, hobby courses, post-secondary school courses, skill or trade courses, and other short or long-term courses offered to adults. Future predictions are that there will be more money and resources directed towards Adult Education. In terms of this, how do you feel about the following statements?

	Yes	No
a) more courses should be offered for adults	66(81)	34(19)
b) the School Boards should offer facilities free of charge for adult courses	38(49)	62(51)
c) adults should pay greater tuition fees to offset the costs of these courses	57(54)	43(46)
d) the government should pay allowances to adults when they are taking these courses	51(26)	49(74)
e) some of the costs of these courses should be borne by local taxation	22(23)	78(77)

Comments re: statements above, if any:

29. Kindergarten has functioned in St. Paul for several years. How do you feel about each of the following statements:

	Yes	No
a) Kindergarten should definitely continue	85(88)	15(12)
b) attendance should be made compulsory	44(28)	56(72)
c) more money and resources are necessary	49(56)	51(44)
d) all teachers of kindergarten should have a teaching certificate	56(79)	44(21)
e) if necessary, additional money should be raised for kindergarten through local taxation	42(42)	58(58)
f) now kindergarten operates on a half-day basis; it should be extended to a full-day basis .	20(12)	80(88)